

# TOWN OF HERNDON

*Enriching the Quality of Life and Promoting a Sense of Community*



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **VOLUNTEERS CELEBRATED AT 22<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL MAYOR'S VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION NIGHT *O'Reilly Also Honored by Virginia General Assembly***

Herndon, VA (April 23, 2006) – Tireless service on behalf of children in the community.

A passion for the arts – and for bringing high quality artistic programs to Herndon. A creative and envisioned dedication to the promotion of Herndon as an ideal place to live, work and visit.

These are the causes undertaken by three outstanding volunteers in the Town of Herndon, all of whom were honored with Distinguished Service Awards at the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Mayor's Volunteer Appreciation Night, held this evening at the Herndon Harbor House.

Citizens joined Herndon Mayor Michael L. O'Reilly and members of the Town Council in celebrating the spirit of volunteerism in the Town. "The quality of life here in Herndon is due in no small part to the efforts of volunteers in our community," said O'Reilly. "We salute them, we honor them – and, most importantly, we thank them for their service."

Herndon residents honored with the Mayor's highest award, the Distinguished Service Award, include:

**Gary Gepford.** This Herndon High School teacher is most renowned for his environmental program at the school, Students Against Global Abuse (SAGA). Over the past decade Gepford has devoted thousands of hours – more than 1,000 hours in 2005 alone - collecting and recycling

white paper, turning profits of more than \$200,000 into scholarships for students. He was recently certified as a volunteer ESOL (English as a Second Language) teacher and spends Saturday mornings teaching English to newly arrived immigrants in the community. He is a representative to the community advisory board for the Herndon Official Workers Center, is active in local scout activities and is a founder and participant in the Excel Saturday morning tutoring program at Herndon Elementary School.

**Betty Hatfield.** A primary force behind the creation of Promote Herndon, a group of citizen volunteers dedicated to the promotion of the Town as an ideal place in which to live, work and visit, Hatfield has spent countless hours leading and motivating the group toward its mission. She has personally visited each and every restaurant and hotel within the Downtown area in an effort to develop joint promotional strategies, and her stamp of creation, review and approval is on all of the collateral pieces developed by Promote Herndon. She serves as the Town of Herndon's liaison to the national Main Street program and was instrumental in the Town's affiliation with the program, and she was integrally involved in the evolution and establishment of the Herndon Downtown Alliance.

**Grace Wolf.** The owner of two small businesses in Herndon, Wolf is an active member of several community and civic organizations, including the Council for the Arts of Herndon (CAH). She is currently president of the CAH Board of Directors; under her leadership, CAH has increased its operating budget by approximately 50 percent, developed and implemented innovative new programming, increased youth scholarships and created new relationships to bring quality arts programming to Herndon. Wolf is the key chairperson for several of CAH's biggest events to include Taste of the Town, National Youth Art Month Celebration and the Children's Hands-On Art Area at the Herndon Festival, which requires more than 100

volunteers to provide arts and crafts to 1,500 children and is Wolf's single largest project for CAH.

In addition to the volunteer awards, Virginia Senator Janet Howell and Delegate Tom Rust were on hand to present a resolution from the General Assembly. Recognizing that "Mayor O'Reilly has served Herndon in divisive times and has worked to keep the community together through his unwavering leadership," the resolution commends the Mayor and serves as "an expression of the General Assembly's gratitude for his leadership and valuable service to the citizens of Herndon."

The Mayor's Volunteer Appreciation Night is held annually in conjunction with National Volunteer Week, which is sponsored nationwide by the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network.

The Town of Herndon was incorporated by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia on January 14, 1879. Located in western Fairfax County, Herndon is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest town in the Commonwealth and is home to more than 22,000 citizens. Businesses located within the Town of Herndon, which range from high tech enterprises to entrepreneurially-owned establishments, employ approximately 23,500 people.

For more information, visit the Town's website at [www.herndon-va.gov](http://www.herndon-va.gov).

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